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Palmer/Pt.

March 27, 1974

Honorable Jacob K. Javits
United States Senate
Washington, D. C. 20510

Dear Senator Javits:

I am replying to your inquiry dated March 12 regarding Mr. Robert Bersson's questions about two motion pictures. Senator Buckley has previously inquired on behalf of Mr. Bersson and we have sent him a similar reply.

The producer of the two films, while not commenting directly on any resemblance between his movie "Z" and US Government activities, did assert that the film "State of Siege" was about the work and death of USAID advisor Dan A. Mitrione. In our opinion this portrayal quite unjustly besmirched and blackened the reputation of Mr. Mitrione. Neither Mr. Mitrione nor any other officer of the Department of State or of the Agency for International Development (AID) has participated in any way in torture or condoned police brutality of any kind. The objective of the program in which Dan Mitrione served, and in which he gave his life, was quite openly to assist other countries to develop effective, humane concepts of public safety administration. As a result of recent Foreign Assistance legislation, however, all such training programs are being terminated.

At the time of Mr. Mitrione's murder in August 1970 President Nixon called it a "despicable act which will be condemned by men of decency and honor everywhere."

Mr. Bersson may be interested in the enclosed newspaper article which discussed the film.

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I hope the foregoing information and the enclosed material will be helpful to you in replying to Mr. Bersson.

Sincerely yours,

BJ

Linwood Holton
Assistant Secretary
for Congressional Relations

Enclosures:

1. Correspondence returned.
2. Material as stated.

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